

## Stop 5: Truman's Early Political Career

Mr. Truman's political career started here in Independence in 1922. In that year Mr. Truman was elected to the position of judge in Jackson County. At that time a judge in Jackson County was what we now call a county commissioner. As a Judge, Truman's job was to insure that county roads, schools, and hospitals were built. These construction projects involved millions of dollars. Some of the Judges who were around before Harry were known to take some of that money for themselves. Truman's parents had always taught him to be honest and Mr. Truman refused to follow in the illegal footsteps of the earlier Judges. Mr. Truman's honesty quickly gained him the respect of the people of Jackson County. As a result the people of Missouri elected Truman to the US Senate in 1934.

Mr. Truman quickly made friends in the Senate due to his honesty. He also used his love of history, that his mother gave him, to become a successful Senator. As a senator Truman set up a committee to look into illegal activity in military construction. When Truman set up this committee he used a similar committee that had been set up during the Civil War as a model. With history as a guide, the "Truman Committee" saved the government millions of dollars. As a senator, Mr. Truman also relied on his love of reading. Whenever a bill was introduced in the Senate, Truman would go to the Library of Congress and read all that he could about the bill in order to have all of the facts before making a decision. Truman was becoming a successful politician. The honesty, that Truman displayed as a judge and senator along with his love of reading and willingness to work hard were traits that he got from his parents.



Jackson County Courthouse

### Activity 5)

Answer the following questions:

1. What do Judges in Jackson County do today?
2. How long did Harry serve as a Senator?
3. What was the name of the committee that Harry set up as Senator?

Harry's parents were not the only influence on him. Harry also tried to be like his hero's. From here go to the west end of the courthouse to the statue of a man on horseback.